

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 03869 01 OF 02 191959Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 TRSE-00 /069 W

-----192026Z 012537 /53

R 191637Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9614

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RYEKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BRUSSELS 03869/1

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PINT,BE

SUBJECT: BELGIANS FORESEE A SECOND AND STRONGER TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT

REF: BRUSSELS 3815

SUMMARY: PRELIMINARY MANEUVERING BEGINS ON THE FORMATION OF A NEW

MULTI-PARTY COALITION TO GOVERN BELGIUM UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF

LEO TINDEMANS, THE CLEAR WINNER IN SUNDAY'S LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BRUSSE 03869 01 OF 02 191959Z

TINDEMANS REMAINS MUM ON HIS INTENTIONS, BUT OTHER CHRISTIAN PARTY

LEADERS INDICATE A DISPOSITION TO TRY FOR A BIG COALITION COMMANDING

NG

A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

COMPLETE RETURNS INDICATE THAT THE CHRISTIAN PARTY HAS

MOVED DECISIVELY AHEAD OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PSB) AS BELGIUM'S

LEADING MASS PARTY, RAISING ITS SHARE OF THE NATIONAL VOTE FROM

32.4 PERCENT IN 1974 TO 36.2 PERCENT.PSB HELD STEADY AT THE 26-PERCENT LEVEL.INDEMAN'S CHRISTIANS WILL DOMINATE ANY GOVERNMENT COALITION LIKELY TO BE FORMED.WHATEVER THE COMBINATION,THE PROSPECTS ARE THAT TINDEMAN'S II WILL BE STRONGER THAN HIS ALWAYS SHAKY FIRST GOVERNMENT.END SUMMARY.

1.BELGIAN POLITICAL LEADERS BEGAN JOCKEYING TODAY FOR POSSIBLE POSITION IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT THAT PRIME MINISTER LEO TINDEMAN, THE BIG WINNER IN SUNDAY'S NATIONAL ELECTIONS,IS EXPECTED TO FORM. TINDEMAN IS NOT LIKELY TO ENTER INTO FORMAL CONSULTATIONS UNTIL NEXT WEEK.IT COULD BE A MONTH OR MORE BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING AS MANY AS NINE PARTIES (COUNTING THE REGIONAL DIVISIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN AND LIBERAL PARTIES)PRODUCE AN AGREED POLITICAL EQUATION. MEANWHILE,THE TINDEMAN CARETAKER GOVERNMENT WILL CONDUCT BUSINESS AS USUAL,WITH ENHANCED CONFIDENCE AND PRESTIGE.

2.TINDEMAN AND BELGIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY WERE THE ONLY CLEAR WINNERS IN AN ELECTION THAT DID NOT ALTER THE BASIC PROFILE OF BELGIAN POLITICS.BUT SUNDAY'S BALLOTING DID PRODUCE A SIGNIFICANT ACCRETION OF POWER FOR CVP/PSC,WHILE ITS CHIEF RIVAL,THE BELGIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSB),ONLY HELD ITS GROUND.OVERALL,IT WAS THE SAME DISAPPOINTING STORY FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY,WHICH OCCUPIES THE RIGHT SECTOR OF THE BELGIAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM.THE APRIL 17 ELECTIONS MAY ALSO HAVE SIGNED THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF AN ERA OF LINGUISTIC PARTIES,WHICH IN THE LAST TWO DECADES HAVE DRAWN OFF FROM THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES MORE THAN 20 PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL VOTE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BRUSSE 03869 01 OF 02 191959Z

3.IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGE OF VALID BALLOTS CAST,THE FOLLOWING IS THE OUTCOME SUNDAY AS COMPARED TO THE MARCH 1974,RESULTS:
CVP - 26.5 PERCENT,UP 3.2 PERCENT OVER 1974
PSC- 9.7 PERCENT,UP 0.6 PERCENT
CVP/PSC COMBINED - 36.2 PERCENT,UP 3.8 PERCENT
PSB - 26.3 PERCENT,UP 0.2 PERCENT
FLEMISH LIBERAL PARTY (PVV) - 8.7 PERCENT,DOWN 1.3 PERCENT
WALLOON LIBERAL PARTY (PRLW) - 5.4 PERCENT UP 1.0 PERCENT
BRUSSELS LIBERAL PARTY (PL) - 1.6 PERCENT,UNCHANGED
PVV/PRLW/PL COMBINED - 15.7 PERCENT,DOWN .3 PERCENT
COMMUNIST PARTY - 2.7 PERCENT DOWN 0.5 PERCENT
VOLKSUNIE - 10.1 PERCENT,DOWN 0.1 PERCENT
RASSEMBLEMENT WALLON - 2.4 PERCENT DOWN 2.4 PERCENT
FRONT DEMOCRATIQUE FRANCOPHONE - 4.2 PERCENT,UNCHANGED

4.THE 5.5 MILLION BELGIANS WHO VOTED SUNDAY (92 PERCENT TURNOUT) CAST JUST UNDER TWO MILLION VOTES FOR THE COUNTRY'S MASS PARTY OF THE CENTER,CVP/PSC.IN SO DOING ABOUT 200,000 MORE VOTED CVP/PSC THAN IN 1974.A GOOD MANY WERE FLEMINGS WHO DESERTED THE SCANDAL-

MARRIED LIBERAL PARTY.BUT THE CHRISTIANS ALSO FREW
VOTES FROM THE LINGUISTIC PARTIES IN FLANDERS AND WALLONIA-
PARTICULARLY THE LATTER.
5. PSB WHOSE PERSONALITY IS SPLIT BETWEEN MODERATES WHO BEHAVE
LIKE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND IDEOLOGUES TAKING THEIR LEAD
FROM THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY,ON BALANCE WENT NOWHERE: MODEST
GAINS IN WALLONIA AND FLANDERS BEING OFFSET BY LOSSES IN BRUSSELS.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 03869 02 OF 02 191904Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 TRSE-00 /069 W
-----192025Z 011875 /53

R 191637Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9615
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 BRUSSELS 03869/2

6. THE BELGIAN COMMUNIST PARTY HIT A POSTWAR LOW OF 2.7 PERCENT
OF THE POPULAR VOTE,LOSING ONE OUT OF SIX OF ITS 1974 SUPPORTERS.
WHEN DELAYED VOTE COUNTS ARE COMPLETED IN HAINAUT PROVINCE,THE
CP SEEMS LIKELY TO HAVE LOST TWO OF ITS FOUR PARLIAMENT SEATS.
OTHER SPLINTER PARTIES FARED EVEN LESS WELL.NEITHER THE MAOISTS
(AMADA)NOR THE NEW STARTERS IN THE POLITICAL SWEEPSTAKES - THE
ECOLOGY PARTY AND THE FEMINIST PARTY - MANAGED TO REACH THE 1

PERCENT LEVEL.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BRUSSE 03869 02 OF 02 191904Z

7. IN THE MAKING OF A GOVERNMENT NOT VOTER PERCENTAGES BUT SEATS IN THE (LOWER) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS. WHEN THE COMPUTERS FALL SILENT, THE 212 SEATS WILL PROBABLY BE DIVIDED AS FOLLOWS:

CVP/PSC - 80

PSB - 62

LIBERALS - 33

VOLKSUNIE - 20

FDF - 10

RW - 5

COMMUNIST PARTY - 2

8. A MAJORITY IN THE HOUSE IS READILY AVAILABLE TO TINDEMANS IN THE FORM OF A CENTER-RIGHT COMBINATION OF CHRISTIANS AND LIBERALS. BUT THIS WOULD BE A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT MAJORITY STANDING IN EITHER WALLONIA OR BRUSSELS AND THUS, BY DEFINITION IN BELGIAN POLITICS, WEAK. TINDEMANS IS ON RECORD AS DESIRING A BROADLY-BASED GOVERNMENT ABLE TO MOVE DECISIVELY TO RESOLVE BELGIUM'S ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS.

9. THE SIMPLEST WAY TO ACHIEVE THAT AIM - AND TO OBTAIN A GOVERNMENT MAJORITY IN ALL THREE REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY - IS A TWO-PARTY CHRISTIAN-SOCIALIST COALITION. ALL PROFESSIONAL OBSERVERS EXPECT TINDEMANS TO EXPLORE THAT POSSIBILITY FIRST, BUT NONE THINK HE WILL HAVE AN EASY TIME OF IT. THREE YEARS AGO TINDEMANS FAILED TO NEGOTIATE A COALITION WITH PSB. MOST OF THE POLICY ISSUES ON WHICH THE ATTEMPT FOUNDERED - NOTABLY ABORTION AND CONFESSIONAL SCHOOLS, - REMAIN UNRESOLVED. PERSONAL ANIMOSITIES - PARTICULARLY HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE AGGRESSIVE CVP PARTY PRESIDENT, WILFRIED MARTENS, AND THE MILITANT WALLOON SOCIALIST LEADER, ANDRE COOLS - ARE GREATER NOW THAN IN 1974. EVEN WITH THE STRONG HAND WHICH BELGIUM'S VOTERS DEALT HIM SUNDAY, TINDEMANS WILL SIT DOWN NEXT WEEK TO AN ARDUOUS GAME OF POLITICAL POKER WITH THE OUTCOME FAR FROM FOREORDAINED.
RENNER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, COALITION GOVERNMENT, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BRUSSE03869
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770140-0972
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770444/aaaablwm.tel
Line Count: 212
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 19f7b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BRUSSELS 3815
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2768754
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIANS FORESEE A SECOND AND STRONGER TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT
TAGS: PINT, BE, (TINDEMANS, LEO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/19f7b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009